



BUDGET COMMITTEE

Town of Hollis

Seven Monument Square
Hollis, New Hampshire 03049
Tel. 465-2209 FAX 465-3701

Minutes of January 13, 2009

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall and was called to order by Chairman, Chris Hyde at 7:30 PM.

Members present: Chris Hyde, Chairman; Peter Band, Selectmen's Representative; Bill Beauregard, School Board Representative; Tom Jambard, Bob Labednick, Lorin Rydstrom Frank Whitemore.

Staff present: Troy Brown, Town Administrator; Paul Calabria, Finance Director; Russell Ux, Police Chief; Jeff Babel, Director of Public Works, Rick Towne, Fire Chief and Deborah Adams, Secretary

Selectmen present: Vahrij Manoukian, Chairman; Frank Cadwell, David Petry

Lorin Rydstrom was recently appointed by members of the Budget Committee to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Bill Matthews. This term will expire at the conclusion of the Hollis School District Annual Meeting in March 2009. Lorin is sworn into office by Moderator, Jim Squires.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vahrij Manoukian leads the BudCom, and all those present, in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation of Town Budget

Vahrij reads an opening statement to the BudCom. The Selectmen recognize the difficult economic situation and as a result requested the department heads to maintain their services with no new spending. He is pleased to present an operating budget that is only \$104,000 over last year, which is only a 1.15% increase. This represents the Town's best efforts. No new positions are being considered and there will be no new capital requests. They have budgeted for a 2.5% COLA and a merit based salary increase for employees. Road rebuilding will be increased by \$75,000 and 2 police cruiser and a heavy duty utility truck are being requested. The poor economy has also reduced the revenues by \$122,000, with the largest decrease in interest income, scrap metal and building permits. The overall tax rate is estimated to be \$4.83, which is an increase of 5.6% over 2008.

Chris questions the salary increase that is being budgeted. Paul explains that they have budgeted a 3% merit increase and a 2.6% COLA. Troy points out that many employees are not eligible for a merit increase and will only receive longevity pay. Paul explains that there has been a change in how salaries are calculated for budgeting purposes. Union employees had a certain format, while non-union employees were different. This budgeting change will make the process consistent for all employees.

Operating Budget – Presented by Paul Calabria

Executive – Salaries are up by 4.46%, which includes merit increases and a 2.6% COLA. The engineering consultant line item has been removed and the IT Specialist's salary for cable TV has been transferred to Information Systems. Stormwater expenses are up. The 2007 budget for stormwater was encumbered and used in 2008, therefore no funds were budgeted last year. This needed to be increased for this year to cover costs for engineering services, environmental testing, and development of the annual permits to the EPA. This is an unfunded mandate from the Federal Government. Lorin questions if they have thought about not funding this. Paul mentions that there have been some communities assessed with very stiff fines for not complying with these mandates. Management Services is a contingency fund for an unexpected expenses. Volunteer Recognition is a new item that was created last year to thank board/committee members and other volunteers for their service to the town. Elder Services is a new busing program. Office Equipment has been increased slightly to begin upgrading equipment at town hall. Much of the furniture used by town hall staff are outdated

and are not ergonomically correct. These will be replaced a few each year.

Town Clerk/Voter Registration – This is a 2.84% increase. Salaries are up slightly and postage rates were increased by USPS last year. Voter registration is down, as there will not be 4 elections again this year.

Finance – This is down 9.1%. The assessing contract is reduced for this year. The tax collector salary is down due to retirement with the new hire at a lower salary and decreased hours.

Legal – All legal expenses have been pooled into 1 budget, with 3 subcategories. \$25,000 was pulled from Planning & Zoning this year and reduced to \$15,000 within this budget. \$5,000 is being added for personnel matters that may require legal advice.

Employee Benefits – There has been an increase in retirement rates, yet this only reflects a 6 month increase. Next year the town will get hit for the full 12 months. Dental rates have remained the same, however an extra bill was paid in 2007 resulting in a false increase for 2008, therefore the new budget is down. Union medical is down, as there are no new hires for this year. Personal time buy back is down as a few longtime employees have now retired and will not be utilizing this request. Chris questions if these figures are merely placeholders, pending the outcome of union negotiations. Paul admits that he does expect some of this to change based on the final negotiated contract. He has included the 3% merit and 2.6% COLA to use as placeholders.

Planning and Zoning – This is down due to the transfer of legal to its own line item. The remainder of this budget is flat.

Town Building and Grounds – Grounds maintenance is down, as well as highway garage maintenance. Major building maintenance has been increased. Troy explains that last year a warrant article was presented to create an expendable trust. The intent last year was to create this fund to have enough appropriated for these kinds of projects, however the warrant article was amended on the floor to restrict it to emergency use only. They would like to amend the purpose of this fund to broaden the description. If this amendment is approved, he would like to see the budget amended by \$20,000 to remove this line item. Bill asks if they have any savings for these projects. Troy explains that they do not have any capital reserves for buildings and facilities. The purpose of the expendable trust was to help plan for some projects, as well as any unexpected items that may occur. The goal was to take these items out of the operating budget, where they were essentially guessing what may happen each year. He points out how the school recently set up a similar trust fund.

Bill explains that the school's trust fund is not for regular maintenance or emergency items. It is intended to save up for known upcoming projects. Regular maintenance should be within the operating budget. Troy indicates that each department does budget for annual maintenance items, yet unplanned things that come up that are in excess of \$500 could be expended from this trust. Bob feels that if they know they will need to paint buildings or replace doors/windows, this should come from the operating budget. He is concerned that once this money is saved in the trust, they will just find things to spend it on. He agrees this should be just for emergencies.

Troy reiterates that the purpose of the fund is to help stabilize these cost items throughout the budget. They will still budget and plan for routine maintenance and supplies. Chris recalls a discussion last year about how each department had contingency funds built into their maintenance budget. Rather than having each department in charge of their own maintenance budget, this can be better handled by having just 1 account. Troy explains that Jeff oversees the maintenance/cleaning expenditures for all buildings and facilities, excluding the police and fire buildings.

Russ explains that with both police and fire having a full time administrator at each facility, it seems redundant to have work orders being passed around to many different people in order to get some work done. Now there is a full time administrator overseeing the work at their own facility. DPW doesn't have the manpower to handle all the buildings. Peter points out that this is only \$40,000 out of a \$9,000,000 budget. Bill is still concerned that it does not appear that the town is saving for any large projects. The expendable trust was supported by the BudCom and the voters for the school. They should use the same model for the town. He is not seeing any planning ahead being done. Peter indicates that they do have a CIP that they work with.

Troy directs the BudCom to look at the second to last page of their handout. This shows an accounting of items that were expended out of the trust this past year. The intent of this fund was to deal with these unplanned events, yet also to plan for other scheduled items. They currently have an ending balance of \$16,000, which will carry over. Bob does not want to short change necessary items because of an emergency situation that takes all of the funding. They need to plan ahead and ask for the money. Frank stresses that this fund will cover both planned and unplanned items. Chris agrees that the school's model is much like a capital reserve. He is not sure how to resolve this for the town.

Bill states that they need a plan of what will be needed over time. Debbie explains how the school presented to the BudCom a 4 year plan of their known maintenance items, broken out by each school. This plan was also presented to the public. This seemed to be very helpful to understand the intent of their expendable trust. She suggests having each department head and the selectmen prepare a similar long term plan of known major maintenance items that can be presented to the BudCom and the public.

Cemetery – \$5,000 has been added for special projects, however this will be funded through the perpetual care trust fund, which will come in as offsetting revenue.

Insurance – Workers Compensation has hit with a very large increase, which is the result of several major claims.

Municipal Association – This is up 3%.

Information Systems – This is up 18.8%. The salary associated with cable services is now included in this budget, which was transferred out of Executive. Bill comments that the school has a rotating system for their computer equipment and are able to obtain refurbished machines at much reduced rates. He suggests that the town could possibly work with the school with this same type of program to rotate computer equipment.

Police – The salary line item is up with the 3% merit and 2.6% COLA included. The union part time salary is for a maintenance position. This budget includes 2 new cruisers and an extension on the motorcycle lease. Legal is down, as they have eliminated the contracted prosecutor. Tom questions why vehicle maintenance is not down if they have new vehicles. Russ explains that 3 of the 4 vehicles already exceeds 100,000 miles. The fleet is in poor shape. The mobile data terminals started back in September. He has already noticed more stress on the vehicles now that they are on the road for 2 more hours for each shift. He will need to continue with replacement of 2 vehicles again next year.

Bill questions why he would need to turn over the cars at 100,000 miles. Russ explains that this is merely odometer mileage, yet the motor is running for much longer. There is much idling of the engine that is done during the day, which causes more stress. The actual driving time on the vehicles is not easy highway miles, but involves much stopping and turning. The engine has many more miles than the odometer shows.

Frank questions the overtime. With more officers hired last year, this should go down. Russ explains that he only hired 1 new officer last year. Much of his overtime expenses are contractual items. He must pay his officers overtime when they work on a holiday. He points out that with more police employees, the overtime expenses actually increase. He has just enough officers to meet the daily needs. When 1 officer is out for vacation, sick or out on training, this shift must be covered and he must pay overtime to another officer. If he is ever able to add more employees than he actually needs on a daily basis, then he could reduce overtime, but this is not conceivable.

Russ explains that he has eliminated the contract he had with an attorney for prosecution. This saved him \$36,000. This change was better than laying off an officer. He has upgraded the detective bureau to help handle the prosecution load. He does not feel this will affect any of their prosecutions. 90-95% of the cases previously handled by the attorney can be handled by one of our detectives. He can utilize other resources to assist with their other cases. He is comfortable with this change.

Fire – The biggest increase is for a full year lease on the new vehicles.

Communications – This is flat.

Building and Septic – This has been reduced. The septic inspector's salary is down due to less homes being constructed. The existing vehicle used by the building inspector is getting old and will no longer be used for any out of town driving, such as traveling to seminars. Therefore they are anticipating some fuel reimbursement for these trips. Frank questions why the building inspector's salary is increasing when there are less homes being built. Troy explains that while there are not as many large projects to be inspected, there are still many smaller projects that still need inspections. The inspector also serves as the code enforcement officer. Bill asks if they have looked for any offsetting revenue by possibly resourcing the inspector to other local communities for services. Troy states that there is a mutual aid type of an arrangement with local communities, but nothing that is contracted out. They have also been looking into having the building inspector assist DPW with inspections and maintenance for town buildings.

Highway Administration – The increase in overtime has been done to reflect the trends over the past few years. Winter maintenance has been the biggest cause for overtime, yet lately there have also been heavy rain storms during the

summer.

Emergency Management – This remains level.

Road Rebuilding – The is increasing 16.6%. Sidewalk maintenance has been reduced, yet they still need some money budgeted, just in case a water line breaks under the sidewalk. Peter stresses that this is an area where they cannot be penny wise and pound foolish. The must keep up on the roads in town. Bob questions why truck repairs has not dropped more now that they have new vehicles. Jeff explains that he still has some old trucks that need repairs. 1 old truck will need to be painted this year. He is asking to replace a 1985 Chevy 1 ton. This vehicle will be equipped with a plow, but not with a sander. He will still have a 1990 water truck, a 1997 pick up and a 2000 dump truck.

Tom is concerned about Rideout Road. He feels this road needs to be salted, as it is very icy and is putting people in jeopardy. This is very hazardous. He recommends changing this to be a salt route. Vahrij agrees. He travels this road daily and sees many accidents. Russ also agrees about the safety of this road. Vahrij recalls a condition that this road was not to be salted. Chris feels this may be a liability issue to the town if they are not salting. He suggests the Selectmen look into this.

Street Lighting – This remains level. Chris thought they were trying to decrease this budget. Jeff explains that he ran into a bunch of red tape when he attempted to shut some street lights off. He will be looking into this again. There was much public opposition to eliminating street lights.

Solid Waste Facilities – This is up due to salaries. Jeff mentions that grinding brush will be a large expense this year. The demolition removal is offset by some revenue.

Solid Waste Disposal – This is down 1.33%

Health Department – This remains level.

Animal Control – The only increase is for fuel oil. The kennel must be heated, by law. Russ explains that the cost to operate this kennel is much higher than what he would like. He did look into subletting, yet it turned out to be cheaper to keep this in Hollis. He would like to do something with this building to help reduce some costs. They already keep the heat as low as possible, yet enough to keep the pipes from freezing. The heat is then bumped up if they get a dog. The building has 6 runs, with 1 of them used for the storage of food.

Health Agencies and Hospitals – This remains level.

Welfare – This remains level.

Parks and Playgrounds – This remains level.

Recreation – Overall this budget it down. The director's salary has been increased and there is a decrease in field improvements. Chris mentions that he was given a spreadsheet showing the revolving account that was established last year. These are all in and out items. There is a year end balance of \$12,000. He is concerned that it appears that the Recreation Commission has not had a meeting with a full quorum in many months. They hold their meetings at the same time as the Selectmen, therefore the Selectmen's representative cannot attend. They have a \$50,000 budget with no selectmen oversight. Troy mentions that he has just recently received the Recreation Commission's meeting minutes, which shows that they have held some meetings with legal quorums. The selectmen representative did attend a meeting with them last week. Chris is relieved to hear of this.

Library – This has a small increase, mostly due to salaries. Chris questions why there is no breakdown of this budget. Paul will forward this information to the BudCom. Troy points out that there is a board of Library Trustees that oversee this.

Patriotic Purposes – Most of this is for Old Home Days. The selectmen will be funding ½ of the fireworks this year (\$7,500). In 2006 they funded \$10,000 for fireworks and \$4,000 for DPW/police during Old Home Days. They did not have an Old Home Days event in 2007, then for 2008 only funding for DPW/police had been budgeted.

Conservation Commission – This remains level.

Debt Service – This is down.

Capital Outlay – There will be no new capital outlay for this year.

Capital Reserves –The health insurance expendable trust is down slightly. Chris asks if the Flint Pond account is still hanging around. Paul indicates that this account has \$126,000. The conservation commission has also earmarked another \$29,000 for this purpose. Peter mentions that the selectmen met with the Flint Pond Association last night. They have submitted a new proposal to remove the floating islands from Flint Pond and deposit these at the stump dump. The selectmen still have some questions on this. They gave them another 6 months to get these questions answered. There will be no action for 2009. Chris stresses that there is money taken from taxpayers pockets that is not being used. This has dragged out long enough. He would like to see this money returned to offset taxes for all. He points out that this is the best year to return this money. Bob recalls the selectmen giving them another full year for this, not 6 months. Vahrij confirms that this was extended for 1 year.

Guideline Calculation

	BudCom Guidance
2008 Operating Budget	\$ 9,077,902
In/Out	-
+ Veterans tax credit	192,500
2008 Approved Budget	9,270,402
- In/Out	-
- Veterans tax credit	192,500
- Debt service	1,226,911
Recommended Base	\$ 7,850,991
x Multiplier of 1.8%	141,318
= Base + Multiplier	\$ 7,992,309
+ In/Out	-
+ Veterans tax credit	200,000
+ Debt service	1,325,044
+ Overlay	200,000
Subtotal	\$ 1,725,044
2009 BudCom Recommended	\$ 9,717,353
2009 Selectmen’s Request	\$ 9,582,401

Paul points out that this does not include all union negotiated settlements. They have used a placeholder of 3% for merit increases and 2.6% for COLA increases.

The BudCom has set a recommended budget of \$9,717,353.

The Selectmen are proposing a budget of \$9,582,401. This is \$134,952 **under** guidance and represents a 1.18% actual increase over last year.

	BudCom Guidance	Selectmen Request
2009 Budget	\$9,717,353	\$9,582,401
Real \$ Increase	\$ 239,451	\$ 111,999
Actual % Increase	2.53%	1.18%
Anticipated Revenue	\$ 3,573,589	\$ 3,573,589
Anticipated Town Tax Rate	\$ 4.94	\$ 4.83
Anticipated % Increase	8.15%	5.78%

Peter stresses that this was a tremendous effort by all department heads. This was not easy and was not without pain. To present a budget that is under guidance is amazing. The BudCom’s guidance was tight. They still have to finalize the union negotiations, but they did use a placeholder, although there is no guarantee right now. Chris asks if they will have a negotiated contract by the 2nd review in 2 weeks.

Troy is hoping to have this finalized. They have 2 scheduled union meetings during this time. The items that are still to be negotiated have already been incorporated into the proposed budget, therefore there should be no major changes to the numbers.

BudCom Comments

Chris comments that it is clear that everyone has worked hard on this budget. It is not easy to hold the line. The department heads have done a well job, however in these difficult times, even having a guidance doesn’t protect the taxpayer.

Lorin states that he is the “new guy” on the BudCom and was not a part of setting the guidance. He is concerned that the revenue has gone down so far. A 5.78% tax rate increase is a lot of money. In his world, the world has changed much in the last year. Many people are not getting raises or COLA and many are being laid off. This is a different world we are all living in. The union must realize this. The proposed merit and COLA increases are too high. Salary increases are just not part of the world at this time.

Bob feels the department heads have done a good job trying to keep the budget down. He does have concerns about the tax rate. He would rather see an even budget for this year.

Tom has no problems with what was presented. The selectmen did what they were asked to do and came back even lower than the guidance. There are still some items up in the air, such as fuel costs. It appears they have budgeted for worse case and are hoping for much less. He does agree that the tax rate increase is too much. He also agrees that this is a tough year to have any salary increases. He heard that the City of Concord is contemplating NO raises to employees this year.

Frank agrees with all other comments. The effort was great by department heads and selectmen, yet he feels that more is necessary given the current financial crisis. He does not see any areas within this budget where anyone is suffering. He was hoping they would do better than they did.

Bill also agrees with the other comments. He asks if there is anything important that will not be funded this year. Peter comments that they are covering all of the essentials. He was cautious to not be foolish with the cuts. To save a dollar now, only to spend more the next year. Bill is concerned about neglecting maintenance items this year, when it will cost more in coming years. He does not want to see them push off any important items. Troy comments that the only important item being pushed out is the town hall renovations. Bill is also concerned about the town hall.

Chris comments that the selectmen have given a good effort on this proposed budget. When the BudCom established this year's guidance the vote was 4-3. This was a narrow majority, while the minority wanted a flat budget. Since that vote was taken, the economy has gotten worse. Zero raises are the norm today, if the people are fortunate enough to keep their job.

David Petry arrives at this time.

Chris stresses that people's savings have been obliterated. Many have lost their retirement. People are having to make tough decisions at home. The town has overextended itself to the point where it cannot sustain this level. He is concerned how this will affect the taxpayers. He would like to see the budget cut back more. He recently wrote the BudCom portion for the town report, which includes a graph showing how the compounded growth rate has shot up considerably. He is not sure what the schools will come in with for a budget this year. It would be irresponsible to commend the town for meeting the guidance, when that will hurt taxpayers. He would like to see what the town could do to reduce their proposed budget to keep it flat. Even having a flat budget, the reduced revenue will still increase the tax rate. Personally he would love to see a flat tax rate.

Chris would like to hear from the selectmen what services would be impacted by creating a flat budget. He wants to eliminate the 1.8% multiplier. He would like the town to go through this exercise. Frank agrees that this would be good to attempt. Bob feels that a level budget would force the town into letting the dominos fall where they may. Tom would love to see this happen, yet the town has presented a budget that was less than what the BudCom offered for a guidance. How can the BudCom change the rules now? He is also concerned that nobody shows up at town meeting to vote on this. If people are that concerned about their taxes, they need to come out to vote.

Lorin explains how his company started preparing their budget back in August, then realized in October that the economy was worse, so they prepared another budget. They now realize that the economy is even worse, therefore they have started working on a 3rd budget. Bill mentions that he recently sent an email requesting the school budget to be cut back further and to remove the multiplier.

Vahrij stresses that the selectmen took the BudCom's guidance to heart. Before the guidance was set, the selectmen had wanted a flat budget. The department heads agreed to this. Nothing in the budget has been raised other than what is beyond their control. The schools are typically not as tough on their budgets as the town is. Before the town reduces their budget, he would like to see what the school are willing to do. He wants to be treated the same. Paul points out that by dropping the budget the additional \$140,000 to be flat, it will only affect the overall tax rate by .5%. He stresses how the town is only a small portion of the tax rate.

Chris agrees that the burden must be shared. The chairman of the Hollis School Board has already been proactive on this. He anticipates amendments being made from the floor at town meeting to further reduce the budgets. The BudCom will address the school when they meet with them. He still feels the town needs to reduce their budget another \$140,000. There is a level of pain in the world. He is concerned that the revenue projections are not conservative enough. He wants to see what a \$140,000 budget cut would do. Chris is also very concerned about the town negotiating a multiple year contract. He does not want a contract for future years that is not palatable to the world economy.

Vahrij will not agree to jeopardize the safety of this town. Hollis is well taken care of by police, fire and DPW. The recent ice storm proved this. The BudCom asked for a budget and they came in less. People need good road to live on. He agrees to take

these comments under advisement.

David questions if they BudCom will be asking for the same from the school district. Bill indicates that they are already working on this. David is concerned that the BudCom did not give this same speech to the school board during their 1st review of the budget. He stresses that what the BudCom is requesting will require personnel and infrastructure changes that cannot be done. Chris agrees that there will be some concessions made by many. Employees can forego raises for this year. There are many ways around this problem. David is concerned that this is going to throw a wrench into negotiations at this late stage.

Paul asks what valuation increase Chris would be comfortable with. Chris admits that he has not had time to look into this. Paul explains that last year he used a 2.3% increase for valuations, yet has only projected .5% valuation increase for this year. Peter stresses that what has been presented is merely a maintenance budget. To reduce further will be difficult.

David asks for clarification. Does the BudCom want a new budget that is \$140,000 less or do they want to see what changes would have to be made to accomplish this? Troy comments that they will come back with a list of items that would need to be cut to meet this number, but will not have this incorporated into a budget spreadsheet. David stresses that their plan was to finalize negotiations by January 26th, however with this new direction he is not sure that this will occur. Chris states that he wants to hear about the contract prior to the public hearing, as he will need time to review the contract and to discuss it.

All Selectmen leave at this time.

Warrant Articles – Presented by Troy Brown

1. Official Reports – No budget impact
2. Town Hall Expansion, Repairs and Renovation Bond - \$2,500,000 to expand, repair and renovate the town hall building. A 2/3 majority is necessary to pass this article.
- 2a. Town Hall Repairs & Minor Renovation Bond - \$xxxxx to complete structural repairs and minor renovations to the town hall building. This article is just in case the previous article fails so that the safety issues at town hall can be addressed. They are still waiting on a dollar amount for this.
3. Establish Police Special Detail Revolving Fund – This creates a new revolving fund for police special details. The law was amended a few years ago allowing the creation of these revolving funds. With a special revenue fund, the town had to estimate the amount that may be needed for the year and if this was not estimated high enough, the additional funds would have to be expended from the operating budget. The special revenue fund had to be voted on at each town meeting. The revolving fund does not need a vote each year, as it will be revolving from year to year. The fund will be fully audited. This fund does not have to be gross base budgeted, therefore it will help to clean up the budget. The same fund will be established for the ambulance fund, however the RSA does not allow for this type of fund for Old Home Days.
- 3a. Discontinue Police Private Detail Special Revenue Fund – Once article 3 passes, this article discontinues the existing special revenue fund and transfers the funds, plus interest, into the revolving fund for police private details.
4. Establish Ambulance Services Revolving Fund – This is the same as article 3, yet for ambulance services.
- 4a. Discontinue Ambulance Fee Special Revenue Fund – Once article 4 passes, this article discontinues the existing special revenue fund and transfers the funds, plus interest, into the revolving fund for ambulance services.
5. Special Revenue Funds – To appropriate funds from the special revenue accounts. Police private detail and ambulance are listed at zero this year because of the creation of revolving funds. Chris suggests leaving \$1.00 in the police private detail and ambulance funds just in case the other articles for the revolving fund does not pass.
6. Discontinuance of Major Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund - \$26,000 to be returned to help offset taxes.
7. Discontinuance of Major Public Improvement Capital Reserve Fund - \$26,000 to be returned to help offset taxes.
8. Municipal Building and Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund – This will appropriate \$40,000 to be added to the trust fund created last year and amend the purpose of the fund. Last year \$40,000 was appropriated, there is a balance of \$16,000 remaining. By asking for another \$40,000 this year it helps to keep the line item level.

9. Compensated Absences Payable Expendable Trust Fund – This is an existing fund established in 2002. The appropriation remains level.
10. Employee Health Insurance Expandable Trust Fund – This funds the employees health insurance.
11. Operating Budget – This will not include appropriations listed in other warrant articles.
12. AFSCME Local 3556 Multiple Year Collective Bargaining Agreement – The negotiations are still ongoing.
13. Construct Skateboard Park – The selectmen are not sure if the group will be asking for any tax money to fund this.
14. FEMA 2008 Ice Storm Grant – They are estimating a cost of \$200,000 to clean up the debris that fell within the town right of way during the ice storm. They anticipate receiving \$150,000 from FEMA to help, yet will still need the additional \$50,000 to fully fund this clean up. The selectmen are reluctant to take this out of the operating budget.
15. Establish Agricultural Commission – This is not a budget item.
16. Baxter Road Paving by Petition – Troy anticipates this coming in for paving a portion of this road. He hopes to have a dollar figure for the work by the next meeting.
17. Renewable Energy by Petition – Troy anticipates this petition coming in for a tax exemption for windmills.
18. Conservation Commission by Petition – The chairman of the Conservation Commission would like to adopt the provisions of RSA xxx that allows the conservation commission to expend funds for projects that are outside the town boundaries.
19. Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative by Petition – This petition has already been submitted. Jim Belanger has been working with a group from Amherst-Milford-Hollis to provide bus transportation for non-emergency medical needs of area residents. This article would authorize a \$1.00 fee to be assessed onto every vehicle registration. This fee would be placed into a capital reserve fund to be used for transportation services. Bob feels that people may want to see this expanded to allow transportation for more than just medical.
20. All other business

Chris questions the timing for petitioned warrant articles. Troy indicates that residents have until February 3rd to submit warrant articles to the Selectmen.

Next Meeting will be held January 15, 2009 at 7:30 PM in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall for the 2nd Review of the School Budget

Frank moved to adjourn. Seconded by Lorin. Motion unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Adams, Secretary